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60130-2039
01MRA0076

REMARKS

The Examiner objected to claim 31 as depending upon a rejected base claim, but indicated that this claim would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include the features of the base claim and any intervening claim. Claim 31 has been rewritten to include the features of base claim 24. Claim 32 depends on claim 31 and is also allowable.

Claims 24-30, 34, 35, 37 and 38 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6, 520, 549 to Kalsi. Kalsi does not disclose a latch mechanism including a clutch that prevents movement of an input member from being transmitted to an output member as claimed. Kalsi discloses a pawl lifter 20 that causes disengagement of a pawl 16 from a claw 10 to free a door for opening. Angular movement of a crank 30 is transmitted to a release lever 24 to release the pawl 16. The pawl 16 can also be manually released by using a door handle to move a manual release lever 21 to release the pawl 16. The Examiner contends that the crank 30 is a clutch, the pawl lifter 20 is the input member, and the pawl 16 is the output member. In Kalsi, the crank 30 does not prevent movement of the pawl lifter 20 from being transmitted to the pawl 16 as claimed. If the crank 30 is decoupled, the pawl lifter 20 will still lift the pawl 16 if the door is manually released by a door handle. Therefore, the crank 30 cannot prevent the pawl lifter 20 from lifting the pawl 16 when the latch is manually released. Kalsi does not disclose a latch mechanism including a clutch that prevents movement of an input member from being transmitted to an output member as claimed.

Additionally, Kalsi does not disclose a blocking member that blocks movement of at least one of an input member and an output member when a clutch is in a decoupled condition as claimed. Examiner states that a lock link is a stationary blocking member that blocks movement of at least one of the pawl 16 and the pawl lifter 20 when the crank 30 is in the decoupled condition. The lock link of Kalsi is not disclosed as being capable of blocking movement of the pawl lifter 20 or the pawl 16. A lock link is also not a stationary component as claimed. It has to be moveable to be able to switch the latch between a locked state and an unlocked stage. Therefore, the lock link cannot function to block movement, and nothing in Kalsi discloses that the lock link works by blocking


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movement of the pawl lifter 20 or the pawl 16. The claimed invention is not obvious, and Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection be withdrawn.

Thus, claims 24-32 and 34-39 are in condition for allowance. No additional fees are seen to be required. If any additional fees are due, however, the Commissioner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 50-1482, in the name of Carlson, Gaskey & Olds, P.C., for any additional fees or credit the account for any overpayment. Therefore, favorable reconsideration and allowance of this application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully Submitted,

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CERTIFICATE OF FACSIMILE

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being facsimile transmitted to the United States Patent and Trademark Office, (703) 872-9306 on May 23, 2005.



Amy Spaulding